17. (Twice Amended) The diagnostic reagent as in claim 16 wherein said fusion protein is approximately a 38 kDaT7 gene 10 product.

19. (Canceled)

20. (Amended) A diagnostic reagent for early detection of Lyme disease produced by a method comprising: providing freshly transformed host cells; constructing a DNA expression vector containing an expressible FlaA encoding DNA sequence; transforming a suitable host cell with said expression vector; plating out said transformed host cells; preparing large scale primary cell cultures from transformed host cells taken from a fresh transformant colony; and inducing FlaA protein expression from said host cells in culture to [obtain] produce a recombinant FlaA protein.

21. (Amended) A diagnostic reagent as in claim 20 wherein said diagnostic reagent is encoded by a nucleic acid sequence as shown in SEQ ID NO:1.

22. (Amended) A diagnostic reagent as in claim 20 comprising an amino acid sequence as shown in SEQ ID NO:2.

23. (Amended) The recombinant FlaA protein of claim 20 comprising an amino acid sequence encoded by the nucleic acid sequence as shown in SEQ ID NO:3.

24. (Amended) A diagnostic reagent as in claim 20 wherein said recombinant FlaA protein is a fusion protein.

25. (Amended) A diagnostic reagent as in claim 24 wherein said fusion protein is a 38 kDa T7 gene 10 product.